



# HIV/AIDS Among Latinos in New Jersey

**As of December 31, 2005**

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- ◆ One in 188 Latinos in New Jersey is living with HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ In the year 2003, Latinos accounted for 20% of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in New Jersey and 14% of the state's population.
- ◆ The number of HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed annually among Latinos has decreased between 1995-1998, increased in 1999 and 2000 and then decreased in 2002 and 2003. Latino residents have accounted for a consistent percentage (17-21%) of cases reported.
- ◆ Among Latinos living with HIV/AIDS in New Jersey with known reported place of birth, 44% were born in the United States, 31% in Puerto Rico, 4% each in the Dominican Republic and Mexico, 3% each in Cuba and Colombia, and the remaining 11% were born in other countries.

## **Latinos with HIV/AIDS in New Jersey account for:**

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- ◆ 21% of all persons living with HIV/AIDS in the state
- ◆ 18% of living HIV/AIDS cases among women and 22% among men
- ◆ 21% of living cases among injection drug users
- ◆ 22% of living cases among men who were exposed to *HIV* through sex with men and 23% among men and 20% women who were exposed to HIV through heterosexual contact

## **Hard hit areas in New Jersey**

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- ◆ Hudson County has the State's highest proportion of Latino residents (41%) and the highest number (1,639) of Latinos living with HIV/AIDS among New Jersey's 21 counties.
- ◆ Essex County has the highest rate of Latino persons living with HIV/AIDS in New Jersey (902 per 100,000) followed by Atlantic (706 per 100,000), Cape May (683 per 100,000), Hudson (656 per 100,000) and Camden (606 per 100,000).
- ◆ Of New Jersey cities with 50 or more Latinos living with HIV/AIDS: Newark (989), Jersey City (788), Paterson (570), Elizabeth (373), and Camden (284) have the largest number of cases.
- ◆ Cities with the highest rates per 100,000 Latinos are Atlantic City (1,445), Newark (1,227), Jersey City (1,160), Hoboken (1,015) and Camden (916).
- ◆ Latinos constituted 83% of all persons living with HIV/AIDS in West New York, 76% in Union City, 69% in Perth Amboy, 60% in North Bergen and 57% in Vineland.

## **Prevention Challenges in Latino Communities**

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Continued health disparities between economic classes, the challenges related to controlling substance abuse, and the interaction of substance abuse with the

epidemic of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are three interrelated issues related to the spread of HIV in communities of color.

The public sector alone cannot successfully combat HIV and AIDS in the Latino community. Overcoming the current barriers to HIV prevention and treatment requires that local leaders acknowledge the severity of the continuing epidemic among Latinos. These leaders need to play an even greater role in combating HIV/AIDS in their own communities. Additionally, HIV prevention strategies known to be effective must be available and accessible for all populations at risk.

### **Prevention Efforts Must Focus on High-Risk Behaviors**

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*Adult/Adolescent Women.* Among Latino women reported with HIV/AIDS, injection drug use accounts for 32% of the infections, and 63% were related to heterosexual exposure categories, and 6% had unidentified risk exposures.

*Adult/Adolescent Men.* Among Latino men reported with HIV/AIDS, injection drug use accounts for the largest proportion (41%) of infections. The second most common exposure for Latino men is having sex with other men (MSM), (27%), while 5% report both injection drug use and sex with other men. Additionally, 20% were infected through heterosexual related exposure categories and 7% with unidentified risk.

*Pediatric.* Eighteen percent of children reported with HIV/AIDS are Latinos; virtually all of these children were infected perinatally.

*Data source: Except for cities, rates were on the 2004-bridged estimates. Cities' rates denominators were based on the U.S. 2000 census, Hispanic or Latino category (of any race). Mode of exposure data is based on modified risk exposure categories as described in the New Jersey HIV/AIDS report as of 12/31/2005.*

### **For more information**

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- ◆ Call or write: New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services  
Division of HIV/AIDS Services  
PO Box 363  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0363  
(609) 984-5874
- ◆ E-mail: [aids@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:aids@doh.state.nj.us)
- ◆ Call the HIV/STD Hotline: 1-800-624-2377
- ◆ Visit our website: [www.state.nj.us/health](http://www.state.nj.us/health)

